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A LATE ROMANESQUE IVORY VIRGIN

IVORY carving, which had continuously been a favored medium for sculpture of small size from the Carolingian through the Romanesque period in most European countries, all of a sudden lost its popularity around the year 1200 and the production shrank to a mere trickle. But during the second half of the thirteenth century the lost ground was regained when in France, and particularly the Île de France, highly accomplished artists chose ivory again as an effective medium for the expression of Gothic gracefulness and started a new flourishing period of ivory carving which was destined to last throughout the Gothic period. This lacuna in the production of ivory sculpture during the first two generations of the thirteenth century coincides with the rise and full development of monumental sculpture. This is by no means accidental, and one is inclined to conclude that the best sculptural talents of that time were drawn away from the so-called minor arts and became engaged in the production of the statuary forest of the great cathedrals. The problems of three dimensional sculpture were worked out primarily in stone, and, although there exists a certain amount of metal work with figures in the round, the examples in ivory are extremely limited in number and therefore any addition to their list is in itself of historical importance.

The subject matter of these early ivories in the round is practically confined to the Crucifixus and the Virgin enthroned, and the number of such sculptures now known is not more than a dozen. To this limited group of Virgins with the Child can now be added a new statuette which was recently acquired by the Art Museum (Cover and Figs. 1-2);¹ surprising is its tiny size of about five and a half centimeters in height, whereas most of the other Virgins measure between ten to thirteen centimeters, and two of them, one in Florence and the other in Copenhagen,²

¹ The gift of Gordon McCormick, it was purchased at the Brummer sale (*Part Two of the Notable Art Collection belonging to the Estate of the Late Joseph Brummer*, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, May 11-13, 1949, no. 290, where the piece is dated, too early, in the twelfth century). Accession number 49-120. Height 0.056 m. The photographs are by Reuben Goldberg of the University Museum, Philadelphia.

² A. Goldschmidt, *Die abendländischen Elfenbeinskulpturen* III, Berlin, 1923, pp. 37 and 38, pl. XLVII, 134 and 136.



Fig. 1. Ivory Statuette in Princeton



Fig. 2. Left side of Figure 1



Fig. 3. Ivory Statuette in Essen



Fig. 4. Front view of Figure 3

even between twenty and twenty-five centimeters. There is only one parallel known to me of an ivory Virgin of such small size, one in a private collection in Essen, Germany (Figs. 3-4) published only a few years ago by Hermann Schnitzler.³ While the Essen Virgin, like the larger one in Florence, served as a reliquary, as a square opening in the back indicates, the Princeton figure shows no such provision for a relic. A hole in the underside of the throne shows that the statuette was fastened by a pin to a base, and it seems very likely, in view of the destination of the Essen and some of the other ivory Virgins, that the object to which it was attached was a reliquary. This pin was apparently not of metal, because otherwise green traces of metal oxide would most likely be visible, but presumably of ivory or wood, and in this case one would expect the base to have been of similar material. Moreover, the surface of the underside is purposely scratched all over, save for a narrow border, a technical device whereby the glue, or whatever the binding material may have been, would hold the object in place better. This too would speak for a wooden or ivory base.

The Virgin sits on a solid throne with a low tapering back which terminates in a horizontal bar below the height of the Virgin's shoulder. The crown on her head lies low on the forehead and is placed over a veil which follows in elegant curves the bent arms with the subtle difference, however, that on the Virgin's right side the veil is held in place by the arm resting on the leg, while at the left side it falls freely over the edge of the throne. The right hand of the Virgin is broken off and most likely held, to judge from analogy, an apple. The Christ Child, held by the Virgin, sits freely and comfortably on her left leg and firmly thrusts his little feet against the Virgin's other leg. He is seen in almost straight profile, raising the right hand, which is carved in flat relief against the Virgin's breast, in a gesture of blessing. There is no damage, apart from the Virgin's missing hand, save that a few prongs of the crown are split off, and that the Virgin's and the Child's heads are more heavily rubbed on top than is any other part of the surface. This ob-

³ H. Schnitzler, "Eine unbekannte spätromanische Elfenbeinmadonna," *Pantheon* XXVI, 1940, pp. 294-295. The Essen Virgin is practically the same size as the Princeton one. I wish to thank Dr. Schnitzler for his great kindness in sending me the two photographs here reproduced.

servation seems to favour our previous suggestion that the figure served as something like a terminal on top of a box. There are a few traces of red color visible at various places in the depths of the folds of the garment. What gives this little figure its peculiar distinction is the cubic solidity, enhanced by the rather thickset proportions and the natural length of the upper legs whereby a convincing profile view of the figure has been achieved, while more frequently Gothic Virgins in a seated position show the upper legs foreshortened to such an extent that they are meant to be seen only from a frontal view. The easy flowing folds of the drapery which, however, are broken sharply over the feet, thus changing their rhythm, permit us to date the figure within comparatively narrow limits of time, roughly around 1220-1230. In the second quarter of the thirteenth century a process of increasing slenderness begins and from this point of view our Princeton statuette is one of the very earliest ivory sculptures in the round we have today.

More difficult is the problem of localization. Among the few ivory Virgins of this period, published by Goldschmidt and Koechlin,⁴ there is not a single one to which ours could stylistically be attached, a fact which is hardly surprising if we realize that, among those published so far, no two resemble each other sufficiently to permit a regional affiliation. There is no stylistic affinity to the above-mentioned statuette in Essen (Figs. 3-4) except that both are the same size and have a similar feeling for solidity and massiveness. On the whole, the artist of the Essen Virgin, though seemingly only slightly earlier than the carver of the Princeton statuette, is still more indebted to the Romanesque past and its more severe stylization. Only in the most general aspects, chiefly on account of its remarkable realism, can the Princeton statuette be compared with the one in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum in Berlin⁵ which for the very same reason is generally considered to be a German product.⁶ The Virgin is smiling, not with the graceful smile which characterizes good French sculpture, but a seemingly forceful smile

⁴ Goldschmidt, *op. cit.* pl. XLVII, 133-136; R. Koechlin, *Les ivoires gothiques français*, Paris, 1924, I, pp. 45ff.; II, nos. 1-5; III, pls. I-II.

⁵ Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 37 and pl. XLVII, 135; Koechlin *op. cit.* I, p. 49; II, p. 2, no. 5; III, pl. II.

⁶ Goldschmidt mentions that traces of red color are visible all over the surface of the Berlin figure. We observed the same in our figure, as mentioned above.

turning into a grin, an expression one finds particularly in those German sculptures which try to imitate the French. The souls in Abraham's bosom in the Last Judgment portal of Bamberg cathedral are the most exaggerated example of this trend. Another feature, more strongly emphasized in Germany than in other European countries, is the already mentioned shift from smooth to sharply breaking folds. Unfortunately, the Berlin statuette is damaged around the feet, the very spot where this feature would be most apparent. But Goldschmidt noticed the close relation of the Berlin ivory Virgin with the stone Madonna in the tympanum of the "Goldene Pforte" at Freiberg in Saxony and the wooden Virgin in the Liebfrauenkirche of Halberstadt,⁷ and in the latter we find a treatment of the folds which, especially in the lower parts, compares very well with that of our figure. Even so, these relations to the Berlin ivory Madonna and the two monumental Virgins in Saxony are not close enough to prove also for the Princeton statuette a Saxonian origin. These parallels are helpful only in so far as they seem to support the thesis of a German origin. We would not be surprised if some scholar should propose an origin farther west of Saxony, perhaps in the Rhine-Meuse region. One does well to remember that Goldschmidt, even in the case of the Virgin figures in Hamburg and Florence which are more individualized in their style, leaves a question mark after their general attribution to France!

Kurt Weitzmann

A BONE CARVING OF THE LYRE-PLAYING APOLLO

FROM about the third to the fifth and sixth centuries Egypt manufactured wooden caskets with inlaid plaques of bone which were either incised and the grooves filled with colored pastes or carved in low relief. They were made for profane purposes and most likely intended to be jewellery boxes presented as marriage gifts. Although these caskets were pro-

⁷ A. Goldschmidt, "Die Freiburger Goldene Pforte," *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen* XXIII, 1902, pp. 7ff. and figs. 7-8.



Fig. 1. Bone Plaque in Princeton



Fig. 2. Bone Plaque in Baltimore

duced in considerable quantity, only very few have survived intact, one being preserved in the British Museum,¹ another in the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore² and single sides of caskets, taken apart, can be seen in the museum of Cairo.³ All of them were constructed with truncated lids; this seems to have been the normal shape, revived in many of the Byzantine rosette caskets of the tenth and eleventh centuries which, like the earlier Egyptian ones, were covered with classical subjects and served a similar purpose.⁴ The plaques around the high borderstrip were

¹ Mentioned in E. Maclagan, *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Carvings in Ivory*, Burlington Fine Arts Club, London, 1923, p. 30.

² *Pagan and Christian Egypt*, catalogue of an exhibition in the Brooklyn Museum, 1941, p. 35, no. 97. *Early Christian and Byzantine Art*, catalogue of an exhibition in Baltimore, 1947, p. 53, no. 181, and pl. XVIII.

³ J. Strzygowski, *Koptische Kunst, Catalogue général du Musée du Caire*, Vienna, 1904, pp. 179ff. and pl. XIV. The ivories have lately been transferred from the Egyptian to the Coptic museum.

⁴ A. Goldschmidt-K. Weitzmann, *Die Byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen I*, Berlin, 1930.

fastened to the wood ground with ivory or bone pegs, a method which apparently did not keep the plaques too securely in their place, and, due also to the rotting of the wood, they became loose. Today such isolated plaques exist in great numbers and, if ever a complete listing of them were attempted, we would not be surprised to see them counted by the hundreds.

By far the majority is very sketchily treated and has the character of a mass production article. But there are also a few plaques of quite good quality as, to quote only one example, the one with Herakles and the lion in the Louvre;⁵ the complete casket, with other plaques in the same style which most probably represented more deeds of Herakles, must have satisfied the discriminating taste of a noble lady in the days of dying paganism. Another group, likewise limited in number, reaches what might be termed middle quality; to it belong pieces with enough detail in the designs to be more than sketches, yet lacking the refinement of the best. To this group belongs a plaque presented to The Art Museum (Fig. 1).⁶

Occupying the full height of the plaque, Apollo stands in a frontal position, leaning leisurely on one pedestal and resting his lyre on a second. These two pedestals, fluted in the upper half, are skilfully used as space fillers as well as supports, counteracting the strongly emphasized hip-shot pose of the semi-nude god whose mantle covers the lower part of his body. Space-filling was also in the mind of the carver when he designed the somewhat over-elongated lyre. In the period of the developed Greek style the lyre-playing Apollo as the leader of the Muses was always represented fully draped, while in other contexts, especially the hunt, he is nude. But with the beginning of Hellenism the two types were sometimes fused, and this fusion still survives in our Princeton plaque which belongs to the third to fourth century A.D. Over the right shoulder the end of a quiver is visible, and at the lower right a seated dog, both reminders of Apollo as hunter. The artist's sure instinct for good composition may be seen in the turn of the dog's head back and upward

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 15, fig. 2.

⁶ It is the gift of Gordon McCormick and was acquired from the Brummer Collection (*Part Two of the Notable Art Collection belonging to the Estate of the Late Joseph Brummer*, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, May 11-13, 1949, p. 39, no. 160). It measures 0.085 x 0.052m. Accession number 49-119. The photograph is by Reuben Goldberg of the University Museum, Philadelphia.

along the axis of the upper part of the body and the quiver. This straight diagonal from the lower right to the upper left gives, by simple and effective means, liveliness to the design.

The Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore possesses a bone plaque with a very similar Apollo figure (Fig. 2).⁷ It is broken along the right frame, but the Princeton example makes it now quite certain that a lyre on a pedestal is missing and perhaps also a dog in front of it. Yet, in spite of the extreme closeness of the motif which points not only to a common archetype, but in all likelihood to the same workshop tradition, the differences in style are quite marked and apparently not to be interpreted in terms of quality so much as of time. The Walters piece, obviously the earlier one, shows less emphasis on the hip-shot pose and at the same time a firmer stance and a more fleshy quality in the modelling of the body. The folds of the mantle are more plastically treated than the sketchily carved ones of the Princeton plaque. This gives to the latter a picturesque effect typical of a certain phase of the late classical style which is less concerned than the classical past with the problems of physical reality.

The Princeton and the Baltimore plaques belonged to caskets on which other plaques, now lost or unidentified, probably also represented Olympian gods. Such plaques exist, *e.g.*, in the Museo Profano of the Vatican which has one of the best collections of this type of Egyptian bone carving. There we find a drunken Herakles, a Zeus, and several Dionysos figures,⁸ as in general the Bacchic thiasos is the most common theme with an abundance of varied types of Satyrs and Maenads. Apollo, to judge from the preserved repertory, was not so popular a subject as Dionysos and Herakles. Besides the pieces in Princeton and Baltimore, there is an Apollo plaque in Dresden, found in Egypt,⁹ but it belongs to the great mass of inferior products and represents Apollo in a not too gracious frontal position. It is against the background of such products that the Princeton and the Walters plaques stand out as pieces in which a good classical model has survived more purely.

Kurt Weitzmann

⁷ Reproduced with the permission of the Walters Art Gallery.

⁸ R. Kanzler, *Gli avori dei musei profano e sacro della Biblioteca Vaticana*, Rome, 1903, pls. IV, 1; IX, 4-6; X, 2; and others.

⁹ R. Pagenstecher, "Die Gefässe in Stein und Ton, Knochenschnitzereien," *Expedition Ernst von Sieglin*, II, 3, Leipzig, 1913, p. 231, and pl. LV, 9.

SOME STUDIES BY PUVIS DE CHAVANNES

THE Platt Collection of drawings in The Art Museum includes a group of sketches by the nineteenth-century muralist, Puvis de Chavannes. They were not intended as finished works of art, but are preparatory studies for the large decorative "frescoes"¹ on which his reputation was based. Five of the group have been selected for discussion here. With the possible exception of one (Fig. 1) they are studies for the decorations of the years 1882-1890, the period during which the artist's style arrived at its fullest development.

Contemporary taste, when it concerns itself with Puvis at all, is apt to dismiss him as a minor and outmoded decorator. We have almost forgotten that at the turn of the century he was the most renowned living mural painter, and that as late as 1924, the centennial of his birth, a commemorative statue was raised to his memory in a Paris square. During the ceremony which took place following its unveiling he was hailed as one of the great painters of France.²

It was not only conservative critics like André Michel and Kenyon Cox who admired Puvis, but also members of the French *avant-garde* who, like Stéphane Mallarmé, rejected sociological realism and luminism. What were the qualities on which his fame was based?³

Puvis has been regarded as a classicist and, because of analogies between his work and that of the Italian Quattrocento, as a "primitive." Michel has seen him as the man who returned French painting to the "straight broad road" of the tradition of Poussin and Corot.⁴ There is an element of truth in all of these views. Although Puvis was by no means a Pre-Raphaelite, the

¹ Although Puvis worked in fresco only once, as a young man, when decorating the interior and exterior of his brother's house at Cuiseaux, his large wall paintings, executed in oil on canvas, are often referred to as "frescoes," because of their flatness and subdued color.

² "La Célébration du centenaire de Puvis de Chavannes," *Beaux-Arts* III, January 1st, 1925, pp. 1-2.

³ This problem has puzzled modern critics. It has recently been investigated at the suggestion of Alfred Barr: Robert Goldwater, "Puvis de Chavannes: Some Reasons for a Reputation," *Art Bulletin* XXVIII, 1946, pp. 33-43. I am indebted to this article for valuable background material.

⁴ André Michel, *Puvis de Chavannes*, notes by Jean Laran, Philadelphia and London, 1912, pp. xiv-xv.

flatness and rigorous simplicity of his work are in clear opposition to the grand-manner Neo-Classicism of the Academy.

There can be no question, moreover, of the utter sincerity with which he strove to reconcile a private ideal of classical purity, morality, and simplicity with the demands of a public art. With a naturalness approaching naïveté, he aspired to those values which are commonly believed to epitomize ancient Greek art and thought. This was recognized by his contemporaries. "... si Platon avait peint," remarked Jules Simon, addressing the banquet in honor of the artist's seventieth birthday, "il eût peint comme Puvis de Chavannes."⁵ Paul Gauguin, who admitted an "immense respect" for Puvis, wrote in a letter from the south seas to a friend, "Puvis explains his idea, but does not paint it. He is a Greek, while I am a savage."⁶

His approach to art was as much a philosophy of life or a mode of thought as it was a manner of painting. As a consequence, the process by which Puvis' murals developed shows the effect of his love of simplicity and clarity. His procedure can be documented, as his friend and biographer, Marius Vachon, has demonstrated, as a stage by stage progression.⁷

The value of the Princeton drawings is enhanced by relating them to the development of the works for which they are studies. By this means the role which they played in the growth of the larger work can be shown, and they can be given a truer evaluation.

Puvis' murals were not based, as are those of a commercial decorator, on the ideas of a patron. His conceptions came to him suddenly, at unexpected moments; "visions" complete in all their parts, even to the most vast and complicated compositions.⁸ Only after a period of gestation, however, when he felt that the idea was completely evolved, was it put on paper. Then the essentials of the composition were established in a rapid sketch. Although inevitably altered to some degree, it was this initial study which decided the character of the final composition. This was the last moment when Puvis allowed himself the freedom of improvisa-

⁵ Léonce Bénédict, "Les Dessins de Puvis de Chavannes," *La Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* VII, January, 1900, p. 25.

⁶ Goldwater, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.

⁷ Marius Vachon, *Puvis de Chavannes*, Paris, 1895.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.



Fig. 1. Study of Figures (Princeton)

tion and execution which, in the process of Delacroix or Van Gogh, continued until the final strokes of the completed work.

Upon completion of the composition sketch, as Vachon states, a new phase of constant and laborious study from nature began. Numerous sketches were made of figures, landscape, and architecture, based on memories of the artist's travels in France and his daily walks from his home in the Rue Pigalle to his large studio at Neuilly-sur-Seine. A freely drawn page of figure studies in the Platt Collection (Fig. 1)⁹ is typical of this phase.

The drawings of the third stage were done in the studio. The artist occupied himself with the development of studies for the individual figures of the composition directly from the model. The majority of the Princeton drawings, some of them squared for enlargement into the final cartoon, demonstrate this phase of the development.¹⁰ Typical of the group is a study of a worker

⁹ Accession number 48-495. 0.312 x 0.245 meters. Crayon on blue-toned paper.

¹⁰ It is possible that certain of these studies are not the actual drawings made from the model, but tracings from them, involving certain simplifications of form.

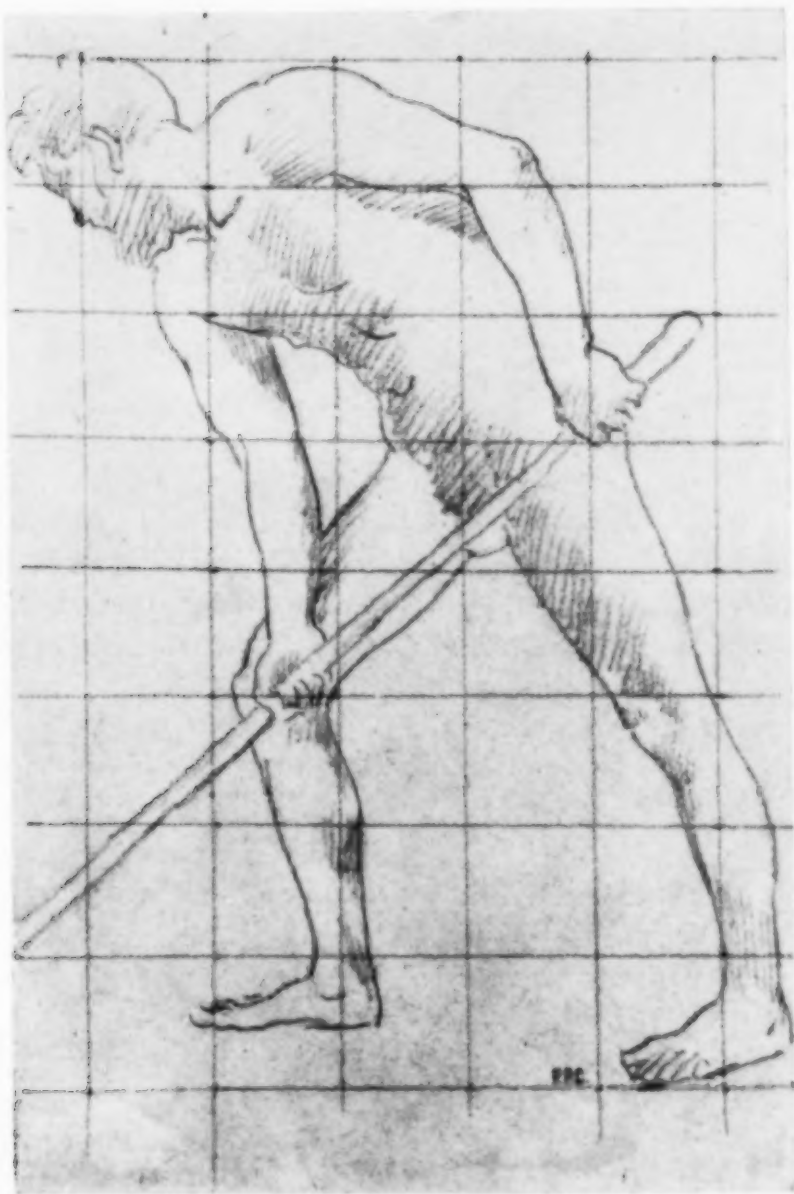


Fig. 2. Study for Figure 3 (Princeton)



Fig. 3. Puvis de Chavannes, *Inter Artes et Naturem* (Rouen)

moving an architectural fragment (Fig. 2),¹¹ for *Inter Artes et Naturem*, a panel finished in 1890 for the Rouen Museum (Fig. 3). Even without its transfer grid it would be evident that this figure was not intended as an independent work of art, but that it is only one part of a larger scheme. That the purpose of the study is outside itself is evident even in the use of the crayon. There has been no attempt to focus the attention on any one part of the drawing either by variation of the width or blackness of the line, which remains uniform throughout, or by a change in the amount of shadow or the degree of detail. The sketch, despite its undeniable high quality, simply aims to establish the essential contours of a figure for the final painting.

Puvis' idealizing and symbolical aim is also evident. Using the same model, a scientifically-minded draftsman of the Quattrocento, obsessed with anatomy, would have looked below the skin to exploit the muscular tension of the working pose, while Puvis' treatment of the musculature is relaxed and cursory. He makes no attempt to record the strain of a laborer wielding a crowbar to raise a heavy stone, for his worker is not a real one, but a symbolic embodiment of the archeological wealth of France. Neither does he care about the effect of motion. Dynamic effects of vitality and movement, so essential in the studies of an organic and emotional sculptor like Rodin, would be harmful intrusions into the timeless and symbolical world of Puvis de Chavannes.

It is instructive to realize how little the pose has been changed in the final version. Puvis' poses are established beforehand, and like sculptured figures destined for a pedimental group, they are later assigned a position in the final composition. As in fifth-century Greek vase painting, this autonomy of the individual figures in Puvis compositions does not in the least involve psychological rapport between them.

The smallest design unit is not always a single figure, however. A Princeton study (Fig. 4)¹² of a group of "ardent youths who swear to consecrate their lives to Physics"¹³ done for the Sor-

¹¹ Accession number 48-477. 0.167 x 0.26 meters. Squared. Crayon on tan-toned paper.

¹² Accession number 48-488. 0.368 x 0.329 meters. Squared. Pencil on tan-toned paper.

¹³ *Puvis de Chavannes, Masters in Art Monograph*, Boston, 1902, p. 39.

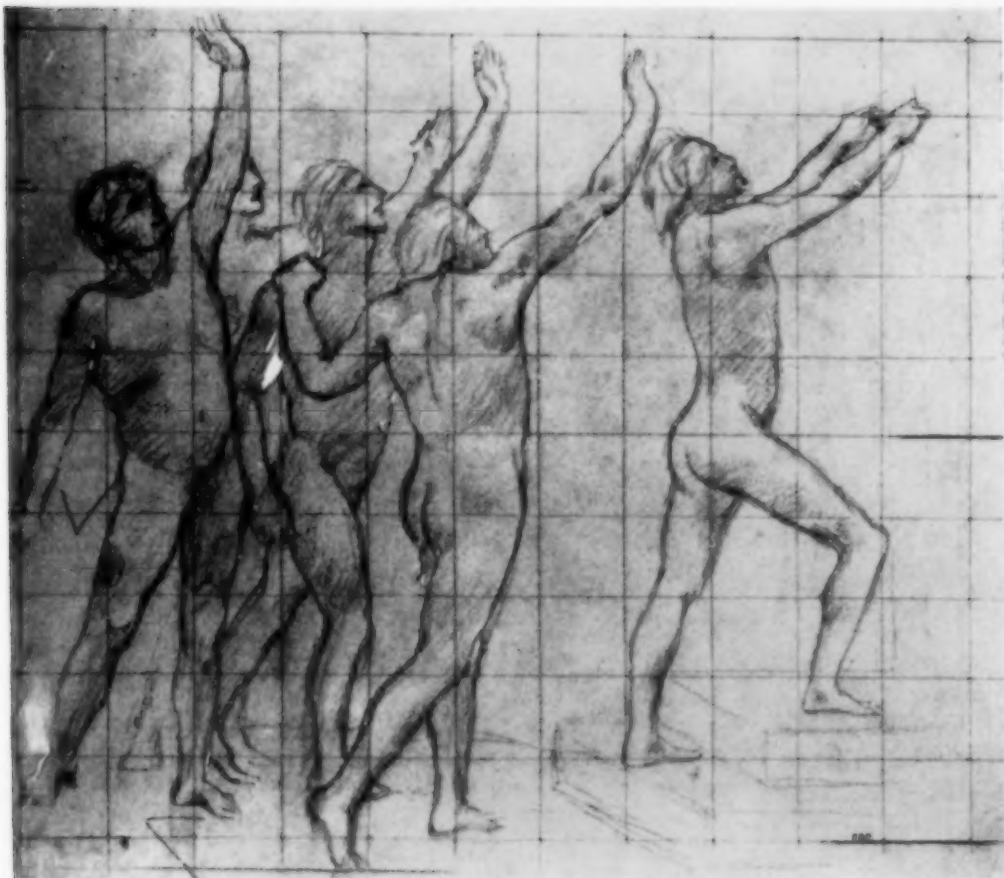


Fig. 4. Study for Figure 5 (Princeton)



Fig. 5. Puvis de Chavannes, *The Letters, Sciences, and Arts*
(Paris, Sorbonne)

bonne hemicycle mural of *The Letters, Sciences, and Arts* (Fig. 5), includes four figures in one inseparable unit. The group is quite obviously a multiplication of sketches from one model. Even in the finished mural no attempt has been made to individualize the features of the youths. To an artist more interested in the actual or specific—or, in Platonic terms, the accidental—this would be regarded as a fault. But to Puvis, who wished to eliminate everything irrelevant to his concept, individualization would have appeared superfluous. As parts of one element, the four figures at the rear are more closely integrated than are the other figures of the mural, but the rhythmic movements which relate them in the sketch are lateral and linear, almost as if the drawing were a study for a Neo-Classic relief.

In the final version, certain changes have been made in the arrangement of the figures, all of them in the direction of a less rhythmic, shallower, and more rectilinear, organization. The second figure from the left which, in the sketch, has been pushed back in depth, has been allowed to come forward in the mural by the lowering of his comrade's arm. The whole group has been flattened, and the rather sinuous rhythms of the sketch have become more severe and architectural. The leader, at the right of the study, is treated as an independent unit, and his relationship to the others has been freely altered.

Further insight into the methods and aims of Puvis can be gained from studying two Princeton studies for *Ludus pro Patria*, completed in 1882, the last panel of the cycle in the Picardy Museum in Amiens. The first of these, a Picardian lance-thrower (Fig. 6),¹⁴ is similar to the Rouen worker, while the other (Fig. 7)¹⁵ represents a group of peasants who are thatching a roof. Although the latter is a group composition, it corresponds to a different phase of the development from that of the youths. It is not assembled from professional models in the studio, but is based on the actual activity of daily life; the sort of study typical of the second stage of Puvis' method. The reasons for the difference between these two studies is not apparent

¹⁴ Accession number 48-492. 0.222 x 0.277 meters. Squared. Crayon on tan-toned paper.

¹⁵ Accession number 48-489. 0.191 x 0.432 meters. Squared. Crayon on tan-toned paper.

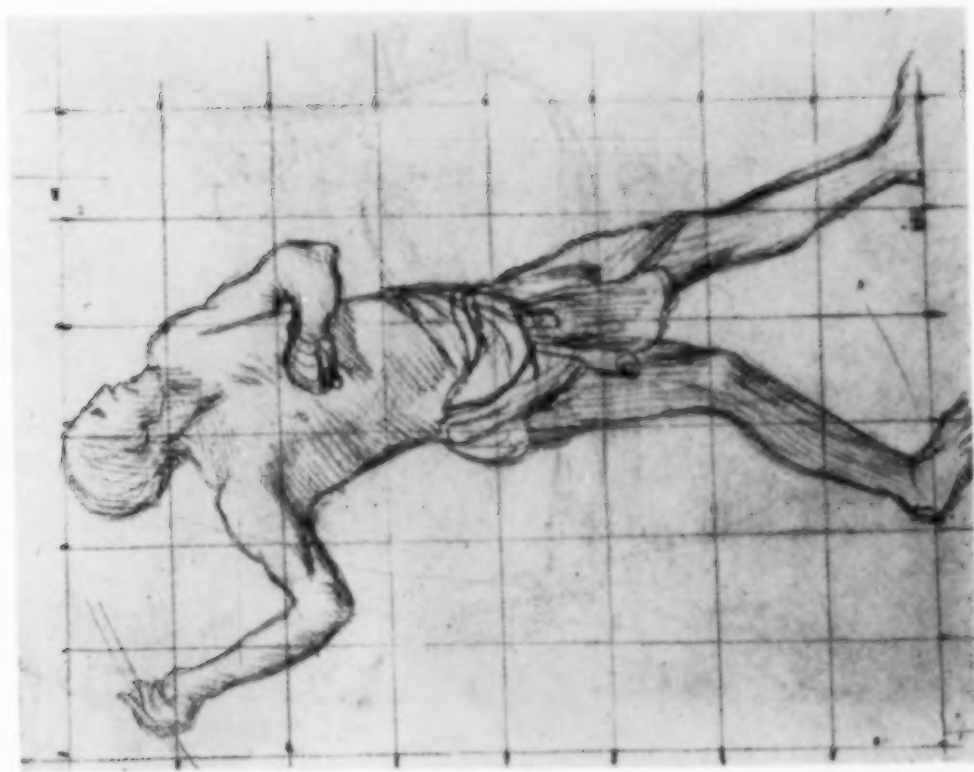


Fig. 6. Study for Figures 8-10 (Princeton)

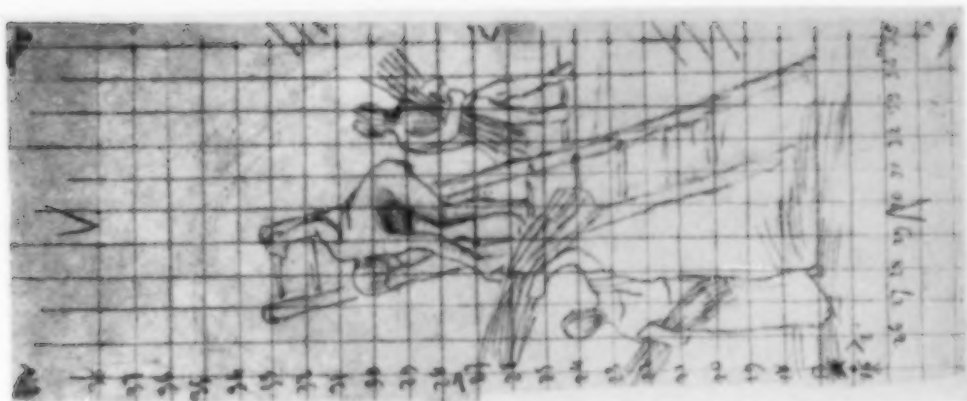


Fig. 7. Study for Figures 8 and 10 (Princeton)



Fig. 8. Cartoon for Fig. 9 (Paris, Luxembourg Museum)



Fig. 9. Puvis de Chavannes, *Ludus pro Patria* (Amiens)

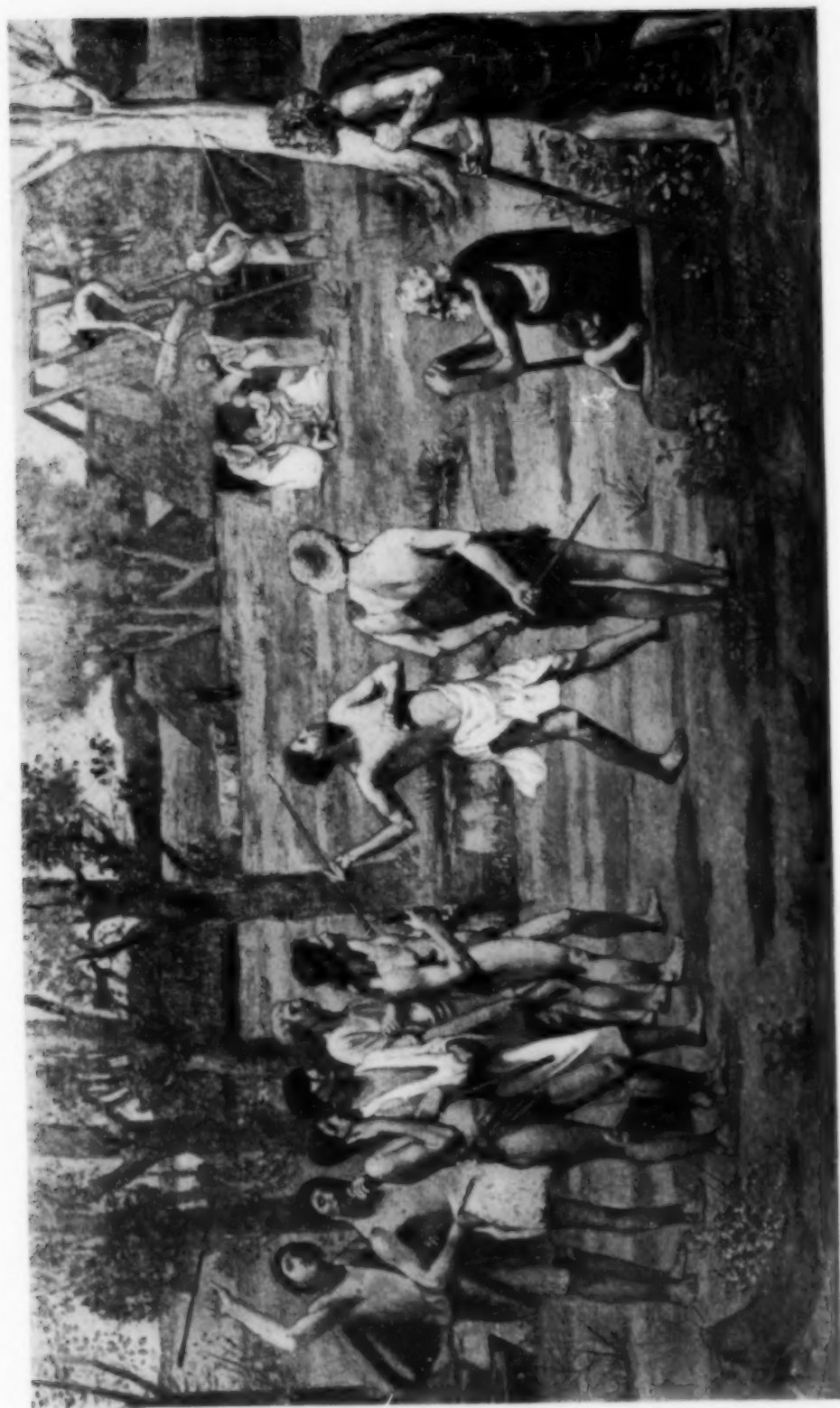


Fig. 10. Puvés de Chavannes, Oil Painting (present whereabouts unknown)

without proceeding to the fourth phase of the artist's procedure: the combination of the individual figures into a full composition.

According to Vachon, the artist, at this point, proceeded immediately to prepare his full-sized cartoon.¹⁶ Between the figure studies and the cartoon, however, the biographer has omitted an intermediate step: a small scale drawing of the entire composition which incorporates the completed figure drawings. Except for a difference in scale and finish, however, the aim of the small composition drawing is similar. When beginning the cartoon, the artist's point of view changed. "A ce moment," Vachon writes, "le dessinateur se transforme en metteur en scène; et, fait manoeuvrer ses nombreux personnages: 'Celui-ci est trop en avant; celui-là pas assez en arrière. . . . à ce groupe il manque un personnage, une petite bonne femme y fera bien . . .'"¹⁷ This process of juxtaposition of tracings is almost closer to modern photomontage than it is to painting. Castagnary, criticizing Puvis in 1869, resented such unpainterly procedure: "M. Puvis de Chavannes ne dessine ni ne peint, il compose. C'est sa spécialité." Castagnary also realized the influence of Puvis' idealism on his paintings: "Compose-t-il, au moins, comme le fait la nature, avec des êtres vibrants, qu'ils soient hommes, animaux ou arbres? Non. . . . Il lui faut pour exprimer ce qu'il appelle son idée, des corps imaginaires, se mouvant dans un milieu imaginaire."¹⁸

In a small scale cartoon for the Amiens mural in the Luxembourg Museum, our two sketches are used (Fig. 8).¹⁹ The lance thrower forms the focus of the composition, while the group of roof thatchers can be seen by a house in the left foreground. The secondary position of the latter group provides the answer for the use of a "second phase" sketch, not studied from studio models. Detailed anatomy was considered unnecessary for background figures which were to be painted in a summary fashion.

In the final mural (Fig. 9) our group has been removed and has been replaced by another scene. Why did the artist make

¹⁶ Vachon, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Goldwater, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

¹⁹ Luxembourg number 398. Bistre oil on canvas, 2.50 x 0.55 meters. Signed at the lower right: P. Puvis de Chavannes. Reproduced in *La Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* VII, January, 1900, pp. 20-21.

this major alteration when translating his composition sketch to the full-sized cartoon? Vachon explains the principles which guided the artist in this stage of the development: "Les règles . . . sont: 'l'indispensabilité' des personnages, la logique et la simplicité de leurs gestes et leurs actes; l'ordre architectonique de tous les éléments de la composition. Dans aucune de ses peintures, il n'admettra un groupe, une figure, un motif de décor, qui ne se lie étroitement au sujet, qui ne soit indispensable à sa représentation. 'Le plus petit bouche-trou, dit-il, suffit à faire crouler l'édifice tout entier, en éveillant la méfiance du regard; un détail insignifiant, étranger à l'idée mère, est capable d'en détruire toute la puissance d'émotion.'"²⁰ Puvis and Vachon give us a clear picture of the process of regrouping and elimination of elements by which the final design is perfected. In this case, the Princeton group has evidently been regarded as unnecessary to the completeness and unity of the conception.

If Puvis' interest in the flatness of the wall is considered, another reason will be seen for eliminating the group. The left half of the composition of the Luxembourg cartoon is harmed by the powerful diagonal recession begun by the figures at the lower left and continued rearward toward a focus at our group. In revising the composition, the entire picture has been made shallower and the rectilinear elements have been strengthened in order to prevent any strong recession which would destroy the architectural structure.

Often, during work on his "frescoes" or after their completion, Puvis used their elements, in various combinations, for easel paintings. Both of the Princeton motifs have been used in an oil painting once in a French private collection (Fig. 10).²¹ Somewhat altered, the roof thatchers appear in the middle-ground, rather than in the rear, in a new lateral position between our lance-thrower and the tree which serves him as a target. In this position, the group no longer violates the planar organization of the composition, and the ridge of the roof structure is revealed to provide a horizontal parallel to the frame.

²⁰ Vachon, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

²¹ Oil on canvas. 1.98 x 1.14m. Signed in lower left. Number 92 in H. V. (Vever?) Sale, 1897. Present whereabouts unknown. Reproduction in Platt photograph collection, Princeton.

The anatomical detail of the figures, however, is handled in the same cursory manner as in the sketch, quite differently from the more plastic and studied treatment of the foreground figures. In the new middleground position, the augmented group gains a new relationship to the competing lancers, and thus becomes an essential part of the composition.

Regarded in their proper context, these studies of Puvis de Chavannes demonstrate how closely the concepts of the artist are related to his technical procedure, and they are given a new value as documents of the artistic process.

William Seitz

RECENT ACQUISITIONS

In addition to objects more fully published, the following were received between January and July, 1951:

SCULPTURE AND METALWORK

- Bronze figurine of crouching lion; Assyrian, eighth century. *Museum Purchase.*
- Relief of Menander with masks of comedy (formerly in Stroganoff Collection); Hellenistic. *Museum Purchase (The Caroline G. Mather Fund).*
- Pair of silver medallions, one with head of Medusa, the other with head of Hermes; Hellenistic, third century. *Purchased with a fund given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Marquand.*
- Gilt copper and enamel figure of Christ; Limoges, thirteenth century. *Gift of Russell Veit '06.*
- Terracotta Bambino by Desiderio da Settignano and wooden Madonna, German, sixteenth century. *Given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Marquand by their daughters.*

POTTERY AND CLAY

- Early Helladic bowl, two Geometric jugs with painted ornament, two small Geometric vases with incised ornament, Protocorinthian lekythos, three miniature skyphoi; five figurine heads. *Gift of Miss Hetty Goldman.*
- Black-figure lekythos by the Haimon Painter, Attic, early fifth century. *Museum Purchase.*
- Red-figure pelike, Apulian, fourth-century. *Museum Purchase.*
- Jug of Gnathia ware, third century. *Gift of Russell Veit '06.*
- Figurine, standing female; Bocotian, fourth century. *Museum Purchase.*
- Mongolian tent, Chinese, 14th century. *Gift of J. Lionberger Davis '00.*
- Pair of tomb figures, Chinese, Wei Dynasty. *Gift of Alfred U. Elser '28.*
- Three figures of female mourners, Chinese, Late Chou Dynasty. *Museum Purchase (The John Maclean Magie and Gertrude Magie Fund).*

PRINTS

Heinrich Aldegrever, four engravings of the story of Lot. *Museum Purchase (The Laura P. Hall Memorial Collection Fund)*.

Hans Sebald Beham, seven engravings of the labors of Herakles. *Museum Purchase (The Laura P. Hall Memorial Collection Fund)*.

Carl Hofer, "Two Heads" and "Woman in Armchair." *Gift of William M. Milliken '11*.

Fourteen nineteenth century American and French prints by Eliot Daingerfield, Leon K. Harlow, Alphonse Lamotte, and others. *Gift of Moses Bigelow '98*.

Georges Rouault, five wood engravings, illustrations for André Suarès, "Passion." *Museum Purchase (The Laura P. Hall Memorial Collection Fund)*.

John Tenniel, "Cartoons for Punch." *Gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.*

DRAWINGS

Forty-nine Italian drawings by G. B. Franco, Palma Giovane, Giulio Romano, Taddeo Zuccaro and others. *Gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.*

Seven Italian drawings by Annibale Carracci, Benedetto Castiglione, and others. *Museum Purchase*.

David Vinckeboons, "River Landscape." *Museum Purchase*.

John Inman, "Rip van Winkle." *Museum Purchase*.

John Leech, twenty-eight pencil sketches. *Gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.*

Eugene Lami, "Arrival at Marlborough House"; watercolor. *Museum Purchase (The John Maclean Magie and Gertrude Magie Fund)*.

PAINTING

Byzantine, 15th century, "Deesis." *Museum Purchase*.

Sebastien Stoskopff, "Still Life." *Museum Purchase (The John Maclean Magie and Gertrude Magie Fund)*.

John La Farge, "Landscape in Snow." *Gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.*

Charles Herbert Moore, "Caaterskill, New York." *Gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.*

J. G. Brown, "Lazy Bones." *Gift of C. O. von Kienbusch '06*.

Samuel F. B. Morse, "Portrait of Captain Demaresque." *Museum Purchase*.

Unidentified (added signature of W. M. Harnett), "Still Life." *Museum Purchase (The John Maclean Magie and Gertrude Magie Fund)*.

"Woman chasing Butterflies" and "Woman dressing Hair." Chinese, Ming Dynasty. *Museum Purchase (The John Maclean Magie and Gertrude Magie Fund)*.

Four temple panels with continuous landscape, Japanese 17th century. *Gift of Alfred U. Elser '28*.

Four miniature paintings, gold and polychrome, Japanese, Tosa School, 17th century. *Museum Purchase (The John Maclean Magie and Gertrude Magie Fund)*.

MISCELLANEOUS

Greek glass amphoriskos; Roman glass unguentarium; Book of Hours, French, circa 1470. *Given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Marquand by their daughters*.

Manuscript, prayers and the life of Mary; Ethiopian, eighteenth century. *Gift of Frank Jewett Mather, Jr.*

Bone stylus, Greek. *Gift of Miss Hetty Goldman*.

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